

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 138352

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF, LA, TH

SUBJECT: BACKGROUND ON AMERICAN MISSION ARMY

REFS: A) BANGKOK 10385 B) 10708

1. ORIGINALLY ESTABLISHED IN 1943 IN CALIFORNIA WITH BASIC MISSION OF PROSLETYZING FOR CHRISTIANITY, AMERICAN MISSION ARMY WAS INACTIVE FOR PAST SEVERAL YEARS. VOLAG NOW DESCRIBES ITSELF AS A NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION OF VOLUNTARY UNPAID WORKERS WITH ITS MOST RECENT AND IMMEDIATE MISSION BEING TO PROMOTE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INTEGRATION OF IMMIGRANTS (PARTICULARLY VIETNAMESE) INTO THE AMERICAN WAY OF LIFE WHILE ALLOWING THEM TO RETAIN THEIR OWN CULTURAL IDENTITY.

2. AMERICAN MISSION ARMY IS HEADQUARTERED IN FORT WORTH TEXAS WITH OFFICE IN LOS ANGELES. DEPT. HAS NO INFO ON ROLE OF ERWIN PARDUE IN ORGANIZATION. CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF DIRECTORS IS REV' CECIL JAMES, RETIRED GOVERNMENT SOCIOLOGIST. ONLY VISABLE TIE OF VOLAG TO INDOCHINA
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AND/OR REFUGEES IS BOARD MEMBER DR. DUAC, FORMER DIRECTOR

PUBLIC HEALTH, SAIGON AND NOW CHIEF OF MEDICAL SERVICES, VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, SACRAMENTO. OTHER LEADING MEMBERS ARE BUSINESSMEN, CLERGY, PROFESSORS, ETC. WITH NO APPARENT EXPERIENCE WITH REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT.

3. AMERICAN MISSION ARMY REPRESENTATIVES MOORE AND CHINITZ VISITED DEPT. MAY 30 TO 1) DEPOSIT CREDENTIALS FOR REGISTRATION THROUGH AID'S OFFICE OF PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY COOPERATION AND 2) SUBMIT PROPOSAL TO IATF FOR RESETTLEMENT OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES ON LARGE TRACT OF LAND IN OREGON. DEPT. HAD NOT HEARD OF THIS VOLAG PRIOR TO VISIT. IATF HAS TURNED DOWN RESETTLEMENT OFFER. APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION UNDER REVIEW, PER STANDARD PROCEDURES. KISSINGER

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